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LAW OF THE SEA: LARGE-SCALE PELAGIC DRIFT-NET FISHING AND ITS IMPACT ON THE LIVING MARINE RESOURCES OF THE WORLD'S OCEANS AND SEAS; UNAUTHORIZED FISHING IN ZONES OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE LIVING MARINE RESOURCES OF THE WORLD'S OCEANS AND SEAS; AND FISHERIES BY-CATCH AND DISCARDS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF THE WORLD'S LIVING MARINE RESOURCES

Letter dated 18 November 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to an unfounded allegation made by Greenpeace that Korean vessels are engaged in draft-net fishing in the Mediterranean Sea contained in your report on "Law of the sea: large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas; unauthorized fishing in zones of national jurisdiction and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas; and fisheries by-catch and discards and their impact on the sustainable use of the world's living marine resources" (A/51/404).

In paragraph 39 of the report, reference is made to a Greenpeace report which refers to an Italian Government report alleging that Korean vessels are "currently using high seas drift-nets in the Mediterranean Sea".

The Government of the Republic of Korea has taken all necessary measures to suspend drift-net fishing operations by Korean vessels on the high seas since 1 January 1993, including the revocation of fishing licences, in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 44/225 of 22 December 1989, 45/197 of 21 December 1990 and 46/215 of 20 December 1991. At considerable financial and social cost, the Korean Government has taken measures to scrap all remaining 139 drift-net fishing vessels and to retrain fishermen for alternative employment.

In the light of the fact that the Government of the Republic of Korea has faithfully implemented all General Assembly resolutions relevant to drift-net fishing, the inclusion of this unsubstantiated information in the above-mentioned report is regrettable.

I would like to take this opportunity to confirm to you that no vessels of the Republic of Korea are currently engaged in drift-net fishing operations on the high seas.

I should be grateful if you could circulate the text of the present letter as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 24 (c).

(Signed) PARK Soo Gil
Permanent Representative